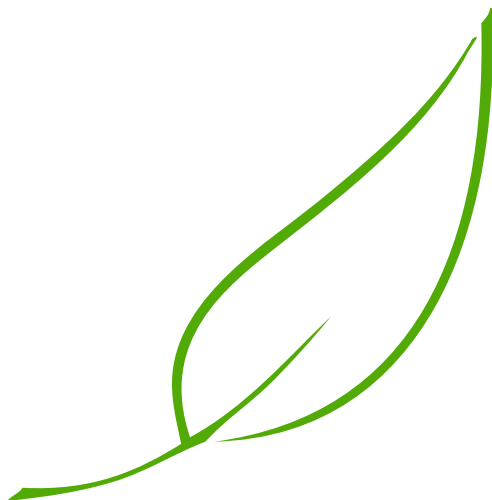


ORDER! ORDER!

by Robert L. Crowe



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(guest enters and stands, waiting to be seated at restaurant. Waiter finally enters and walks by without looking. A few seconds later, walks by again)

GUEST: Excuse me.

WAITER: You're excused.

GUEST: I mean ... *pardon* me!

WAITER: Sorry. I can forgive you but only the Governor can issue a pardon.

GUEST: Look! I've been standing here for quite some time.

WAITER: Yes, I noticed.

GUEST: Aren't you going to wait on me?

WAITER: Sure. That's why they call me a waiter. I can wait on you a little while but I'm really very busy. *(folds arms)* If we were much busier I couldn't wait on you at all.

GUEST: *(becoming a bit perturbed)* I meant ... do you take reservations?

WAITER: No. General Custer tried that and look what happened to him.

GUEST: Look! I am interested in being seated. I'm very hungry. Do you have an available table?

WAITER: You gonna eat a table?

GUEST: Oh, for heaven's sake. I just want to sit down and order!

WAITER: Oh,! Sure! Right this way. If you just want *sit-down* and order ... sure. Now, if you wanted

law and order, that would be different, but sit-down and order? Sure. Here we are. (*brushes off small area of the table where the plate will be set; brushes off the chair; brushes off self and starts to brush guest but withdraws hands*) There you are. A table with a view.

GUEST: A view? Table with a view? What is the view?

WAITER: If you keep your eyes open while you chew, you always have a view.

GUEST: I'm not sure I should mention it, but did you know you have your apron on backwards?

WAITER: Oh. No, it's not on backwards. The purpose of an apron is to protect clothes. Here we just mostly sit around. Would you like a menu?

GUEST: That would be nice, yes.

WAITER: Here you are. (*presents a menu, then a slight pause*) We have everything on the menu.

GUEST: (*looks at it closely*) Yes, I can see that you do. Do you have a clean one? (*hands menu to waiter*)

WAITER: (*frowns; takes menu, turns back and wipes menu on shirt; spins to guest with a smile and flourish*) Here we are!

GUEST: Thank you. Tell me. Do you have a special of the day?

WAITER: Sort of. We have what we call the "special of the week."

GUEST: Yes. Well, what is the special this week?

WAITER: The Heimlich Maneuver. Oh. Would you care for a drink before dinner? We do have a special of the day.

GUEST: Well, I am a little dry ...

WAITER: I know.

GUEST: ... what is the special drink of the day?

WAITER: It's called the Radar Cocktail. It's rum, whisky, gin, vodka and garlic.

GUEST: My goodness! Wouldn't that knock you out?

WAITER: Yes, but with the garlic we would know what table you're under.

GUEST: Well, no. No. Nothing with alcohol in it for me. I'm very thirsty. How about some Gatorade?

WAITER: *(stares for a moment, then turns head at a different angle)* Of course. What year would you like?

GUEST: Just recent will be OK.

WAITER: *(writing on hand)* One nouveau Gatorade. A ... bottle?

GUEST: A carafe will be fine.

WAITER: *(writes)* One giraffe, Gatorade. Well, we are making progress aren't we. What else?

GUEST: Some soup, I think. What do you have?

WAITER: We have pea soup for \$2 and split pea for one dollar.

GUEST: Hmmm. I see you have alphabet soup. What can you tell me about it?

WAITER: Our alphabet soup is famous throughout the entire building. We have a different alphabet letter everyday, but some people say that the soup is very consistent.

GUEST: Consistent?

WAITER: Some people say that every day it tastes like "L," others think it tastes like "H" but I think it tastes like ... *(looks up and moves lips and tongue as if trying to decide the taste)* ... Ohhhhhhhhhh ...



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